

NOV. 4, 1996

Inside: *Limited consensus at the Economic Summit*

Volume 86

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Number 24

# The McGill Daily

UFOs get priority since 1911

## TAs go to arbitration

### Union may strike

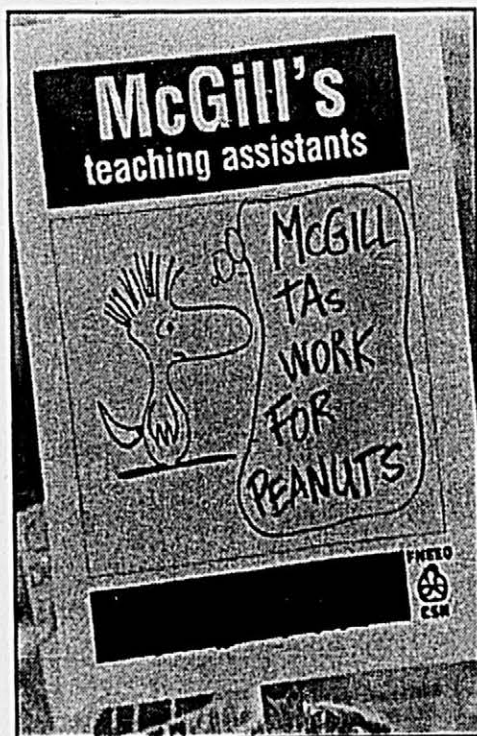
by Jason Chow

Though it has already been two years, it may well take another two before Teaching Assistants and McGill hammer out a contract. The Association of Graduate Students Employed at McGill (AGSEM), the union representing TAs, has applied to Québec's Labour Minister for arbitration after more than two years of fruitless negotiation.

Frustrated, AGSEM has appealed to a third party to decide the outcome of the already 30-month long ordeal. Michael Temelini, joint-coordinator of AGSEM, accused the administration for constantly "stalling." "McGill is not interested in negotiation", said Temelini.

Robert Savoie, McGill's executive director of human resources, stated that McGill has been sticking to the guidelines outlined in March as the basis for their part of the negotiations.

The administration, in light of funding cuts, has proposed a permanent wage cut of almost two dollars an hour to an average of \$16.13/hour and has refused to have TA wages fixed to inflation. Savoie cited that McGill TAs are paid significantly higher than the Québec average, and the administration would like to keep the McGill wage in line with their provincial counterparts. He argued that McGill had to look to the Québec average because



funding is different for each province.

Temelini believes it is unfair to compare McGill TAs to other Québec TAs, most of whom are not unionised. Temelini accused McGill of holding a double standard in which faculty salaries have been compared to the national average while TA wages have been compared to the Québec average. He estimated that other unionised TAs in Canada earn between \$26 and \$28/hour. A wage cut, he warned, would likely affect McGill's ability to at-

tract quality graduate students — integral to research and teaching assistantship — from the rest of Canada and abroad.

McGill would also like to create a 'two-tier' system where TAs would be categorised into 2 groups: TAs who tutor and TAs who mark and grade, with the tutors receiving a higher wage.

Highly critical of this proposal, AGSEM would like to have a 'one-tier' system where all TAs assume the same responsibilities and earn the same wage. Under McGill's plan, tutors would receive \$17-\$18/hour while the markers would earn \$13-14/hour.

AGSEM has proposed the intro-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

McGill Daily

FRANÇAIS

Collaboration spéciale

LOÏC BERNARD ET ALÉXIS LACHAÎNE

## Les « 400 coups » du Sommet économique et de l'emploi

L'éducation, le travail et les jeunes : « Là, ça va péter »

Étienne Gagnon,  
- Président de la FECQ

La jeunesse s'appauvrit, le chômage frappe dur et les décrocheurs perdent espoir. Qu'ils soient au niveau secondaire, collégial ou universitaire, les étudiants semblent avoir des doutes quant à leur avenir au sein d'un « pays » qui ne peut plus subvenir à leurs besoins.

Ils veulent un message clair du gouvernement en ce qui concerne les frais de scolarité. On leur a dit d'attendre au Sommet économique ; on leur a dit que cette conférence pan-québécoise mettrait fin à l'incertitude. Cela n'a pas été le cas.

Le message de la Ministre de l'Éducation, Pauline Marois, et du premier ministre du Québec, Lucien Bouchard, était d'attendre au mois de décembre pour savoir s'il y aurait une hausse des frais de scolarité. Comme prévu, ce message n'a pas été bien reçu par les deux représentants étudiants au Sommet.

Mécontents, Jézabel Palluy, présidente par

intérim de la Fédération étudiante Universitaire du Québec (FEUQ), et Étienne Gagnon, président de la Fédération étudiante collégiale du Québec (FECQ), ont quitté le Sommet en guise de protestation.

Le Sommet économique qui vient de se terminer s'avère ne pas avoir été assez satisfaisant. « On a dit que ce sommet était celui de la décision, explique avec émoi Monsieur Gagnon. On n'acceptera pas de nouvelle échéance. Les étudiants des Cégeps demandent un engagement clair sur la gratuité scolaire au collégial et le maintien des gels de frais de scolarité, selon l'engagement PQ en 1994. Là, ça va péter ! ».

Quant à Mlle Palluy, elle s'est dit déçue de la réponse du gouvernement. « On a été présent au premier Sommet en mars, on était présent aux États généraux, on a accepté de venir à cette table pour trouver des solutions, proposer des choses mais malheureusement on sent vraiment une fermeture de la part du gouvernement », a-t-elle affirmé.

Toutefois le gouvernement a tenu de pied ferme sa politique d'éducation et ce, malgré la décision de la FEUQ et de la FECQ de s'en aller. « J'ai été

très claire, il n'y a pas de décision prise, et lorsque nous la prendrons, nous informerons les gens. Je vais tout faire pour ne pas avoir à aller vers une hausse des frais de scolarité ou des frais afférents », a expliqué Pauline Marois. La ministre admet être désolée du départ des deux représentants mais ne modifiera pas sa position en conséquence. « Ma réaction officielle, c'est que je n'aurai pas souhaité qu'ils partent. Il n'y avait pas de raison qu'ils partent en vue des faits, parce qu'il n'y a pas de hausse annoncée actuellement », a-t-elle poursuivie.

Ayant quitté la table de discussion, les étudiants cherchent de nouveaux moyens de se faire entendre. « Je pense qu'à partir de maintenant, en partant du fait que le gouvernement n'a pas encore voulu nous donner de garanties alors que ça fait six mois qu'on en manque, on va réévaluer notre plan d'action et nos échéances. Puis je vais vous dire qu'au niveau des moyens de pression, tout est sur la table présentement », a déclaré le



notre cher Premier ministre : l'Honorable Lucien Bouchard

président de la FECQ. À présent de nombreux cégeps sont déjà en grève.

Une chose est certaine, le sort des étudiants est déplorable et il faut préparer des solutions concrètes. Deux étudiants sur trois gagnent moins de 10 000 \$ par année, ce qui les place bien en-dessous du seuil de la pauvreté de 16 000 \$. De plus, depuis 1980, le pouvoir d'achat des étudiants a diminué de 26 % et la moitié des étudiants



Sommet  
sur l'économie  
et l'emploi

SUITE EN PAGE 5



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

duction of a student-TA ratio of one to 50 in order for TAs to better cater to the students' needs and to ease the pressure off present TAs, who are estimated to be outnumbered as much as 120 to one in the Faculty of Arts.

"We can't go into a ratio," responded Savoie. "We don't know from year to year the funding we get."

McGill has also refused to accept a clause stating that all the work of the present bargaining unit be done by its members. AGSEM has been pushing this clause into the contract in order to prevent 'outsourcing' — the contracting of services under the union's jurisdiction to other

sources.

Temelini also fears that McGill would cease waiving tuition for TAs under their proposals. Presently, McGill waives tuition for the TAs of three faculties. AGSEM has asked for waivers for all TAs but the administration has been reluctant.

Savoie denied that tuition waivers would end. He argued that the administration wants to pass down the responsibility to the departments themselves.

In response, Temelini stated, "If the university supports the waiver, it should be in the contract."

The union has found themselves in a "strike position" and

they have not ruled out the possibility of a strike. An AGSEM meeting on November 27 will decide what course AGSEM will take. Temelini stated that they were willing to picket to "defend our dignity."

Savoie has stated that McGill is still open for talks: "McGill is still willing to negotiate."

A government conciliator will be asked to assess the issue and an arbitration committee will be formed once arbitration is granted. When the final and binding decision will be reached is still unknown, as the arbitration process is slow and known to take as long as two years.

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# EVENTS

## Monday November 4

• The McGill Debating Union has show rounds on Monday nights, 18h, Shatner 302. Everyone is invited to come out and participate. Volunteers also needed for Nov. 8-9 tournament. For information call 398-6824.

## Tuesday November 5

• LBGTM is holding a coordinating and planning meeting at 18h30, Shatner 432. To find out more call 398-

## Wednesday November 6

• LBGTM's Bisexual Group meets in the Women's Union, Shatner 423, 17h30. Women and men are welcome.

• McGill Students For Literacy holds its annual Read-a-thon in the Leacock lobby, 9h-15h today and tomorrow.

## Thursday November 7

• M.S.I.D.I. presents a panel discussion on "Development Ethics" with professors R. Whitney (History), D. Voneschen (Sociology) and W. Armstrong (Geography). 17h30 in Leacock 214.

• NDG Food Depot will start collecting for the annual preparation of Christmas baskets. Bring your donations to the Food Depot at 2121 Oxford Street (near de Maisonneuve) or use the NDG Food Depot box where you shop.

## Ongoing

• The Sexual Assault Center of McGill Students' Society offers a confidential listening Help Line, 398-8500 open 18h-24h, 7 nights/week. Free support groups, information, and referrals are available through the Info Line: 398-2700.

• PGSS announces a call for papers for the Future Visions Conference: Graduate Students' Perspectives on the New McGill, from graduate students. Deadline: Nov. 15. Info [vpuniversity@pgss.mcgill.ca](mailto:vpuniversity@pgss.mcgill.ca) or 398-3756.

• Congregation Shaar HaShomayim seeks volunteers for meal delivery to seniors. Info: Rona Rochweg, 937-9471, local 155.

• Red Herring contest! Enter the Horrible Haiku contest, or write a crazy escape from any place on campus for our Escape Contest! Submit entries by Oct. 31 to Shatner 303. Also, brain-storming session every Tuesday in Shatner 303, 14h30.

• The Cancer Research Society needs volunteer gift wrappers. All funds go towards cancer research. Info: Nancy, 861-9227.

• Tel-Aide listening service needs volunteers. Info: 935-1105.

• Network of Hope Brain Tumor Support Groups on first and third Monday of every month at the Montréal Neurological Hos-

pital (3801 University), 19h-21h45. Info: 398-1916.

• The Sexual Assault Centre of McGill Student Society seeks male facilitators for a support group for male survivors of sexual assault. Info: 398-2700, 10-17:30h, Mon-Fri.

• The Canadian Studies Graduate Students' Association announces a call for papers for the Third Annual Canadian Studies Conference. Submissions welcomed from all graduate students in all fields who are interested in the study of Canada. Deadline for abstracts is Friday, 2 December. Info: 398-2974.

• Head and Hands needs volunteer tutors for high school students. Subjects covered include French, English, Math, Science, etc. Info: 481-0277.

• If you would like to volunteer to be trained as a literacy tutor, contact Literacy Partners of Quebec at 931-8731 ext. 1413.

• Afternoon and evening bereavement support and self-help groups are being offered free of charge for anyone who has suffered the loss of a family member or friend. Info: 398-7067.

• Loaf Organic Food Co-op orders produce and bulk dried goods on Mondays, 14:30 - 18:30, at 3647 University. Info: 398-7432.



# Hyde Park

## NIGHT OF BROKEN GLASS

Professor Goldhagen, of Harvard University, at a recent appearance in Montréal stated, "Even without the annihilation of six million Jews, the persecution of the Jews during the Third Reich would have been recorded in history as the worst Jewish persecution of this century." This concept calls to mind the event of Kristallnacht, a primary example of this Jewish persecution.

Kristallnacht, meaning "Night of Broken Glass" or "Crystal Night," unleashed its terror on the night of November 9 and continued until November 10. During this period, Jewish communities in Germany, Austria and Sudetenland were pillaged by mobs of German citizens. 7,500 Jewish businesses, 177 synagogues and many Jewish cemeteries, hospitals,

schools and homes were attacked. Lining the streets of these destroyed communities were the remains of buildings and a sea of broken glass. Hence the name, "Night of Broken Glass." Herb Goldstein, a Montréal resident, was almost 15 at the time of the riot. He recounts, "I remember lots of shattered glass and looted stores. I lived on the second floor of an apartment building. Even those windows were broken."

The murder of German Embassy Official Ernest von Rath by a Jew was a perfect excuse to start the riot. However, Kristallnacht was contrived by Secret Service Chief Reinhard Heydrich before the murder occurred. Heydrich fined the Jewish community 1.6 billion reichmarks for "causing" the uprising. "Kristallnacht was planned. Early in the morning of November 9, my father got a call from a non-Jewish cus-

tomor warning of the imminent attack." As a result, Goldstein and his family were able to find safety during the riot.

In order to understand the significance of Kristallnacht, it is important to view it in its historical context. This uprising was not the first anti-Semitic measure taken by the Nazis. As early as 1933, concentration camps were instituted. Laws banning Jews from public office and the professions were introduced. Citizenship was revoked from Jews in 1935 under the Citizenship Law. The same day, the Nuremberg Laws were passed, prohibiting any sexual relations or marriages between Jews and Aryans.

Kristallnacht is unique in that it was validated by the authorities, but carried out by the average German citizen. The citizens were not obliged to take part. They independently de-

cided to participate in this violent rape of the Jewish communities.

For many Jews, Kristallnacht signalled the beginning of the end. Goldstein relates, "With each civil right confiscated, it was like another layer was peeled off an onion. With every discriminatory law, we said, 'OK, it's not so bad. We can live with this.' But after Kristallnacht we knew there was no more hope."

Hope. This is the driving force behind all efforts to eradicate prejudice from our global village. Goldstein remarks, "I find it scary when people are singled out not because of what they do, but because of who they are." We must internalize the fact that prejudice affects all of us. When we tolerate bigotry, eventually bigotry becomes intolerant of us.

Santte Engel

## Letters

### Just doin' my job

#### To the Daily,

Recent opinion pieces in both the *Tribune* and the *Daily* have misrepresented our intentions in regards to the Committee for Financial Ethics Research (FERC).

The Student's Society Constitution mandates that the text of the Constitution and By-laws exist in both French and English and, most importantly, that both English and French versions be "equally authoritative." Our constitution further requires that all amendments "shall be adopted in both official languages."

These provisions not only entrench the linguistic rights of anglophones and francophones — they also ensure, at a University where a majority of students have a functional knowledge of both languages, that the basic structure of the Society is expressed through two different systems of communication. The existence of authoritative English and French versions is an invaluable and cherished asset to those who must interpret the SSMU Constitution.

Without any other legal remedy to preserve the fragile validity of the French version, and in light of the evidence showing that the FERC amendment was only available in English, my colleagues and I decided not to hold by-elections for the Financial Ethics Re-

search Advisor unless a concurrent referendum was held to adopt the French clause.

Further investigation of the circumstances of the Spring Referendum, for which I would like to publicly thank Mera Thompson (Arts Representative), proved to our satisfaction that a French version of FERC was available at most pools and thus that the FERC amendment had been duly adopted.

While the interpretation of some of the clauses that relate to the FERC remains open to question in the absence of a definitive French text, it is clear at least that the Committee exists consti-

tutionally, and so the Elections Office has no further role to play in this saga.

Christopher Muldoon  
Elections Co-ordinator, SSMU

cc: The Tribune

### Hey You!

James Downar, please come down to the *Daily* office to shorten your letter. Letters submitted to the *Daily* cannot exceed 300 words.

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The McGill Daily

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News writers and soon-to-be news writers!

Meeting today (Monday, November 4) at 16h45.

Come to the Thomson House, 3650 McTavish.

Ask for the Blue Room.

Everyone is welcome.



**Brief****Aboriginal voice gets little notice at Economic Summit**

**G**hislain Picard stood in a crowd of delegates waiting for Québec Premier Lucien Bouchard to make his opening address for the province's Summit on the Economy and Employment. The Grand Chief for the Assembly of First Nations of Québec and Labrador surveyed the room full of government officials, big business representatives and community leaders.

Out of the hundreds of delegates gathered, Picard was the only representative of the province's Aboriginal communities present.

"In the March summit, the government promised a seat for each of the First Nations in Québec, but again we only have one," said Picard in response to a question on Aboriginal representation at the summit.

This seemed strange, since the summit was supposed to be the central place where a societal consensus would be reached on the future of Québec's economy and social policy for the next three years.

"I am optimistic and I am not," said Picard of his role at the Summit.

"The situation of Aboriginal communities is so far from the reality of the things being discussed at this conference that it is more of a formality than anything else," he continued.

During the summit, Picard was asked to speak a few times on governmental policies. He addressed the idea of a "social

economy" — a strategy for business, community organisations and the government to collaborate in creating jobs and providing job training for Quebecers. "The position of the Aboriginal communities is that sure, we want to be part of economic growth, but much has to be done at the grassroots level in our communities because we can't be part of any economic ventures in Québec before we have legal conditions such as having our status confirmed and getting loans." Picard also lent his support to a motion forwarded by community groups on a governmental commitment to not further impoverish the population while it cuts the deficit.

Picard's comments were taken note of, but as the resolutions of the various working groups poured out in the three day summit, Aboriginal concerns were nowhere to be seen.

On the third day of the summit, Guy Chevrette, the Québec Minister for Indian Affairs held a press conference proudly announcing three development projects in three Aboriginal Communities in Québec — the only concrete objective that touched Aboriginal communities in the whole summit.

Matthew Coon Come, Grand Chief of the Cree Nation, who arrived for Chevrette's conference and stayed as an observer for the rest of the summit, saw the Aboriginal representation this way: "We are given two minutes to talk about an issue; you can't talk about a complex issue in two minutes."

He affirmed Picard's feelings: "this summit is just a formality."


However, Picard was hesitant to dismiss the summit altogether. "The important thing about this summit is what happens afterwards in the working groups that are

set up."

It remains to be seen how Québec will be willing to work towards a consensus with its Aboriginal Communities in the aftermath of this gala event.

— by Anup Grewal

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**Wednesday, November 6, 1996**



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For more information, contact Chantal Da Silva, SSMU Vice-President (External) at 398-6798 or Chris Carter, SSMU President at 398-6801





La Ministre de l'éducation Pauline Marois (à droite) annonce de nouveaux projets pour les jeunes, un jour avant qu'elle a refusé des mesures concrètes sur l'éducation.

dépendent du régime d'aide financière.

Mais le problème n'est pas seulement financier. Au Québec, tant qu'il y aura 150 000 Québécois et Québécoises de 15 à 24 ans sans diplôme et seulement 7 % des jeunes diplômés du secondaire en formation professionnelle, le taux de chômage ne diminuera pas des 17,7 % actuels. Les entreprises elles-mêmes ne veulent rien savoir de jeunes sans diplômes.

La création d'emploi est donc primordiale et le secteur manufacturier s'avère être la branche ayant le plus grand besoin de main-d'œuvre. « Il manque de gens dans les secteurs techniques. Il y a trop de gens qui vont au collégial et au niveau universitaire, affirme Denis Lafrenière, président du Regroupement des jeunes gens d'affaires. De plus, les jeunes n'ayant aucune expérience ont de plus en plus de mal à trouver de l'emploi ».

C'est suite à ces constatations que la Société québécoise de développement de la main-d'œuvre (SQDM) a mis au point le « Régime d'apprentissage », qui crée un lien direct entre les entreprises et les étudiants de formation professionnelle. Réservé aux étudiants ayant au moins complété un troisième secondaire, le régime d'apprentissage se veut une alternative à la voie scolaire et plus précisément « une formation alternée école-entreprise ». Le jeune devient un apprenti dans une entreprise, tout en restant à l'école pour y recevoir une formation générale. Ceci étant, le jeune est supervisé par un travailleur de l'entreprise, « le compagnon », comme on en retrouvait dans la France du Moyen-Âge.

« Le régime d'apprentissage est intéressant car les petites entreprises qui sont membres du Regroupement des jeunes gens d'affaires ont de la difficulté à trouver de la main-d'œuvre spécialisée, affirme Denis Lafrenière. Pouvoir former ses propres employés, c'est un bon plan ». Un problème qui subsiste cependant est celui des stages en entreprise. Ils se font de plus en plus

rare, car les entreprises n'ont pas les moyens de les offrir. En effet seulement 18 643 stages ont été offerts à des étudiants du collégial alors que la population étudiante en formation technique en compte plus de... 75 000.

Même si les places seront maintenant assurées par le gouvernement, les représentants de la FECQ et de la FEUQ se disent encore inquiets. Ils notent que les salaires offerts aux apprentis seront inférieurs au salaire minimum, car ils ne gagneront que 40 % du salaire de base lors de leur première année dans le programme et 80 % de ce même salaire lors de leur troisième année d'étude professionnelle.

On note par ailleurs que, outre les représentants des groupes étudiants, les invités du Sommet ont en général bien accepté le plan du gouvernement. Il n'en demeure pas moins que les chefs des partis d'opposition voient les jeunes comme les grands perdants du Sommet et sont



PHOTO PAR LUCY ATKINSON

Les délégués discutent entre les discussions.

décus du gouvernement actuel. « Il y a des problèmes réels qui demeurent, affirme Mario Dumont, chef de l'Action démocratique du Québec. S'il y a un groupe qui ne sort pas gagnant du Sommet, je pense que c'est celui des jeunes. Tout le monde dit vouloir travailler pour les jeunes mais quand les jeunes font des propositions, on n'est pas prêt à les écouter », déplore M. Dumont. Les engagements qu'a pris le Parti québécois n'ont pas été tenus, accuse de son côté Daniel Johnson, chef de l'opposition officielle. « Les jeunes sont des gens qui sentent avoir été contredits et trompés par le gouvernement, affirme le leader libéral. Le PQ a promis de geler les frais de scolarité pendant la campagne électorale, mais maintenant il semble que Bouchard et Marois sont en train de mentir là-dessus ».

JÉRÔME LUSSIER

## Des Masques pour la mascarade

Pendant que les nombreux intervenants du sommet socio-économique débattaient au chaud, quelques centaines de manifestants se sont réunis, dans le froid venteux de cette journée d'Halloween, pour protester contre ce qu'ils appellent le sommet de la Résignation. Menée par la coalition « Bas les masques », la manifestation a rassemblé une foule bigarrée, où se mêlaient étudiants, chômeurs, professeurs discrets et anarchistes bruyants.

La coalition voulait dénoncer la « mascarade » du sommet socio-économique, cette « mise en scène de politique-spectacle » disait un fax envoyé au Daily. On reproche surtout au gouvernement Bouchard de ne pas permettre à tous de s'exprimer au sommet.

« On manifeste à l'extérieur à défaut de pouvoir le faire à l'intérieur », faisait remarquer Laïla Inksetta, étudiante en anthropologie à l'Université de Montréal. Son département, comme ceux d'architecture, de design industriel et de travail social, a d'ailleurs voté pour une grève de trois jours afin de protester contre le dégel probable des frais de scolarité.

Plusieurs étudiants du cégep étaient aussi au rendez-vous, comme Mélanie, de Saint-Laurent, qui déclare pour sa part que « si on leur donne un bout, ils prennent tout ».

Ces commentaires reflètent bien l'atmosphère de peur et d'incertitude qui planait au-dessus de la foule. Pour des raisons différentes, tous ces gens sont venus manifester leur inquiétude en face d'un processus qu'ils ne

comprennent pas, et dont les résultats font peur. Partout on scandait des refrains à teneur sociale, comme « Bouchard, arrête ton char, pas de société privatisée, pas de société à bon marché! » et les multiples « l'économie sur le dos des démunis! » On se sentait exclus du processus, et très sceptique quant à la défense de ses intérêts.

Les attaques principales sont surtout dirigées vers les « grandes entreprises dont les profits sont à la hausse, qui bénéficient d'abris fiscaux et de reports d'impôts et qui effectuent des mises à pied ». On leur reproche de contrôler le sommet pour servir leurs fins, et de faire fi des programmes sociaux. Comme le faisait remarquer un manifestant, l'objectif du gouvernement semble être de transformer les programmes publics en programmes communautaires, où les salaires sont considérablement plus bas.

Bref, si on reconnaît qu'il faut couper quelque part (ce qui n'est pas toujours le cas), on souhaite voir le gouvernement épargner les programmes sociaux et l'éducation.

La toile de fond demeure cependant la « mascarade ». On accuse avant tout le gouvernement de tromper les citoyens par une « façade de concertation publique... qui renforcera la règle du profit au détriment de l'appauvrissement ».

Malheureusement, tant que les foules seront aussi peu nombreuses, on peut douter de l'impact réel de ces manifestations. Et si tout ceci n'est effectivement qu'une grande mise-en-scène capitaliste, il faut croire que la majorité des Québécois n'y voient encore que le feu.

***So how long have you had these wild urges? Think you can just throw things on a page, and everything'll be okay, eh?***

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***If you would like to know more about this position, or the nomination process, come to B-03 in the Shatner Building and ask to speak with an editor.***

***Or go get help while you still can.***

**Sommet**  
sur l'économie  
et l'emploi



# Summit on the Economy and Employment

## POVERTY OR THE DEFICIT

### BOUCHARD MAKES HIS CHOICE, COMMUNITY GROUPS WALK OUT

by Anup Grewal

The ballroom on the fourth floor of the Sheraton centre in downtown Montréal broke into a happy and resounding round of applause Friday afternoon at 2pm. The occasion? — Québec Premier Lucien Bouchard had just signed The Declaration on Jobs, a two page document that was one of the concrete results of a three-day summit on the future of the province's economy.

Bouchard later announced that "We have reached our objective and we have reached a new consensus in Québec."

It certainly seemed like he was right. Bouchard's signature on the declaration was accompanied by those of the leaders of the powerful organised labour community and big business representatives.

The Declaration stated that the first priority of the government has to be the development of jobs and the growth of the economy, because competitiveness, productivity and efficiency lead to social stability. Within this framework, reads the Declaration,

the government must also look at the redistribution of wealth, the elimination of unemployment and the protection of those on low income.

But despite Bouchard's relief at achieving his objective of a societal consensus, he could not smile away the spectre of the scene that occurred just one hour before his closing speech.

#### WALK OUT

At one o'clock, from behind a barrage of journalists and television cameras, Françoise Davide, director of the Fédération des Femmes du Québec, François Salligant of the

"We have rejected the proposals of the Premier and the government," she continued.

These three groups had all been members of a coalition that had created the "Zero Impover-

Saxe maintains that not redistributing wealth in society doesn't help the cause of decreasing the deficit because an increasingly impoverished population cannot buy goods to

DAILY PHOTO BY LUCY ATKINSON



Bouchard prepares to sign the final declaration at the Summit.

The Declaration countered the Commission's recommendations, stating that any policy or plan of action that the government takes, should not adversely affect the poorest 20% of the population.

A commitment to this principle would imply "a unified strategy for the creation of jobs and the fiscal measures that it takes to increase its revenues," reads the Declaration.

The commitment would also imply, "a solidarity in sharing the costs of [cutting the deficit]," continues the Declaration.

Zero impoverishment was supported by groups such as the Coalition of Senior Citizens, the Coalition of Community Organisations for the Development of Labour as well as the Fédération des Femmes, The National Coalition Against the Poverty of Women and Solidarité Populaire Québec. And during discussions on the financing of public services, health reform and social assistance reform, speakers such as Ghislain Picard of the Assembly of First Nations of Québec and Labrador and Gerald Larose

"We have reached our objective and we have reached a new consensus in Québec."

— Lucien Bouchard, Premier of Québec

laration, the government must also look at the redistribution of wealth, the elimination of unem-

Solidarité populaire Québec and Thérèse St Marie of the National Coalition Against the Poverty of

DAILY PHOTO BY DAVE RYTHER



Françoise Davide of the Fédération des femmes du Québec speaks to the media.

ployment and the protection of those on low income.

The consensus on the Declaration came after three days of heated discussion between unions and community organisa-

Women, walked out of the final closing sessions of the "consensus-reaching conference."

"We did not get the commitments we were looking for," said St Marie.

ishment Declaration" on the second day of the summit.

The Declaration was proposed as the recommendations of the Commission on the Financing of Public Services were being discussed. The Commission by and large accepted that the most important thing for Québec right now was increasing its competitiveness and not creating new taxes for big business or the wealthiest sectors of the province — despite the fact that community groups have been pushing for just such a redistribution of wealth as an alternative to cutting social programmes.

The Commission's recommendations, applauded by big business and the finance minister Bernard Landry, effectively killed any hope of maintaining social programmes as it stated that such programmes would be considered only "within the limits" of the funds of a government cutting its deficit.

This too, was challenged by community organisations. "It makes me angry that the government, due to pressure from business is cutting taxes to business," said Gary Saxe, of the Coalition for the Defense of Social Programmes.

boost the economy. He argues that by cutting social pro-

"You know, this is not a new discourse. The discourse of comparative advantage that Bouchard is talking about is the same one that led to the colonisation of India and Africa. It is a racist and class-based position that creates exploitation, and it's not even valid anymore."

— Marianne Roy, Solidarité populaire Québec

grammes and not redistributing the tax burden, this is the situation the government is creating.

#### NO POVERTY

Unable to push for such large and fundamental changes at the three-day conference, community organisations decided that at least they could push for a

of the Confederation of National Trade Unions, spoke in defense of the Zero Impoverishment Declaration.

"This will be the big test for the government," said Saxe when the Declaration was made public.

According to Saxe, the Declaration showed the solidarity of

"It makes me angry that our government, due to pressure from business has been cutting taxes to business and increasing the poverty of people."

— Gary Saxe, Coalition for the Defense of our Social Programmes

commitment to the elimination of poverty in principle.

This is where the Zero Impoverishment Declaration came in.

the community groups in face of government cutbacks at this summit — as they united to provide alternatives and reject

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



# ent • Sommet sur l'économie et l'emploi

## Montréalers Protest

### Government Cuts

"Poverty Sucks the life Out of Us"

by Maggie Gilmour

Eileen Cotton is worried. Worried about cuts to social services and how they will affect her and her son, Javier. Standing by a friend carrying a sign that

outside the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Montreal October 29, to send the government a clear message: no more cut-backs. The protest coincided with the beginning of a four-

and housing allowances. "Bouchard and his cohorts are talking about social consensus as if everybody agrees with the cuts, agrees with... the way he is leading society," said Guy-

*"We want to tell the government that the voices of the excluded: the poor, the young, and women must be heard during the socioeconomic summit. We are concerned, all of us, about the budget cuts and the ideology that drastic things must be done for the deficit. There are other ways to balance the budget. The most important sectors of the government: welfare, education, health, are bearing the brunt of the cuts and it is clear that the government has not evaluated the long-term costs of cuts in these areas."*

Josée Belleau

reads "Poverty Sucks the Life Out Of Us," Cotton explained, "I am a single mother, my son is three-and-a-half, and I am on welfare. I would be forced back

*The only weapon the disadvantaged have ever had was to be disruptive," she said. "We have no other power but to be disruptive."*

Anet Henrikso

to work or into a training programme if the welfare cuts went through. The only way we get by is by living in social housing, by using two food banks a week, and used clothing centres, and community lunch programs."

Cotton was one of the 5,000 angry protesters who gathered

day socioeconomic summit held by the Parti Québécois to kick start the ailing Québec economy. The crowd of protesters included anti-poverty workers, feminist groups, teachers, environmentalists, welfare recipients, unions and other community groups.

The focus of the protest was on job creation and the redistribution of wealth. "My demand is... to review the entire fiscal system so that it will be re-invested into social programs," said Marie-Josée Gagné, mother of two. Protesters urged Lucien Bouchard, premier of Québec, and the PQ government to abandon its deficit-cutting program and instead focus on job creation for the 1.8 million Quebecers who are unemployed or working part time. The angry group called for an end to cuts to welfare, education, health

Olivier Musafir, a student at CEGEP Marie-Victorin.

The cuts include \$800 million from education, \$1 billion from the health and social services budget by the year 2000, and \$250 million in welfare.

The protest began at 5 p.m. when protesters started to fill the four blocks of René-Lévesque roped off for the demonstration. Speakers from

pauvreté explained the need for such a protest.

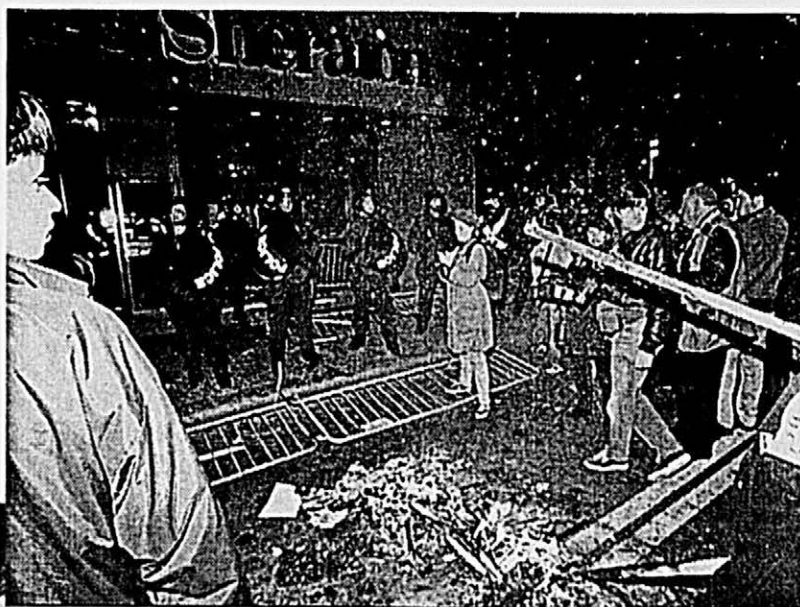
"We want to tell the government that the voices of the ex-

the government has not evaluated the long-term costs of cuts in these areas."

Denyse Lacelle, also a speaker that night, and a spokesperson for community groups in Montréal, made it clear what the two demands of the protesters were: "Job creation and also the redistribution of wealth so that people can live in dignity. We ask for a contract with the government that there be no further impoverishment of 30% of the population that is already poor."

At about 6:30 p.m., the speeches ended and a group of about 500 protesters gathered around the door of the Sheraton Hotel. Although the crowd was angry, there was a feeling of unity and solidarity. In fact, the night was entirely peaceful, until some of the protesters began hurling eggs at the building and set fire to an effigy of Lucien Bouchard. At one point, demonstrators began tearing away the barricades that lined the hotel entrance. One protester tried to stop them, and was punched and thrown to the ground. The crowd quickly took a nasty turn as shouting and pushing erupted along the front lines. About 25 riot police were quickly sent out to restrain the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



community groups all over Montréal delivered speeches calling for an end to the attack on the poor by the PQ government.

In response, protesters chanted "Solidarité" and "They say cutbacks, we say fight back."

Josée Belleau, a speaker at the demonstration and a spokesperson for the Coalition nationale des femmes contre la

cluded: the poor, the young, and women must be heard during the socioeconomic summit. We are concerned, all of us, about the budget cuts and the ideology that drastic things must be done for the deficit. There are other ways to balance the budget. The most important sectors of the government: welfare, education, health, are bearing the brunt of the cuts and it is clear that





## Comment

# Full colour ads aren't worth the price

If you have ever wondered why flashy Pepsi and tobacco advertisements do not appear in the *Daily*, the answer is simple: the *Daily* observes a boycott list.

And after all the work and debate which boycott decisions entail, the fact that the *Daily* fails to publicise this list is a self-defeating shame.

However, after a 15 to 11 staff vote to maintain our boycott against tobacco advertising, the *Daily* will hopefully never take its boycott list for granted again.

We are a publication which aims to responsibly recognise the inequalities which contextualise the news we report, and we drew up the boycott list to reflect this.

An advertisement sends a message as strong as any article or photo; one of the reasons many advertisers still choose to advertise in print media (with the mass market coverage that television offers) is because readers transfer — however unconsciously — the integrity of a newspaper's editorial content to the products advertised alongside it.

To print an advertisement is to endorse the product — no amount of dis-

claimers can negate that. And we composed our boycott list in the belief that what we refuse to print sends as strong a message as what we choose to print.

It would be hard to stomach, for example, printing a scathing feature about Pepsi's collaboration with the oppressive Burmese military regime, while including a Pepsi ad on a subsequent page.

Tobacco advertising, however, proved to be a more complicated case. The arguments for boycotting tobacco advertising are far from weak. Aside from the fact that smoking is the most preventable cause of death in North America, the record of the tobacco industry as a whole is less than rosy. An industry which strong-arms politicians to deregulate its addictive product and whose advertising targets adolescents and plays up its weight-loss benefits to women, is hardly an industry any publication would willingly support.

However, the tobacco industry would also be willing to shell out thousands of dollars, without negotiation, to our newspaper in order to gain more access into the McGill market. The easy money which tobacco advertising promises elicits the

tempting argument: seeing as the *Daily* needs advertising, and seeing as even the most ambitious boycott list cannot excise unscrupulous corporations from our pages, then why not?

The prevalence of smoking in our everyday lives and in the media seemingly renders one more tobacco ad as virtually meaningless. As one of the last independent publications in this city to reject tobacco ads, concerns were raised that financially we are shooting ourselves in the foot. Besides, a sizeable chunk of our editorial board supports the tobacco industry with their own pocket money. An official boycott against tobacco seems hypocritical.

But to some of us, the fact that so few have taken a stand underlines the need to so.

We recognise that ad revenue ensures we can continue to publish the *Daily* and provide a forum for the McGill community. But we are not willing to sacrifice our integrity to do so.

Tobacco ads do generate revenue but there is a cost. To us that cost is too high.

— by Mark Narron, Zachary Schwartz, Kevin Siu

continued from page 7

crowd. For the rest of the night, they stood guard inside the building and along the front. The protesters sat down and made it clear they had no intention of moving. A few impromptu bonfires were started when piles of signs were set afire.

Anet Henrikso of the Women's Welfare Collective in Montreal, explained the violence as a show of frustration.

"The only weapon the disadvantaged have ever had was to be disruptive," she said. "We have no other power but to be disruptive."

Also, Henrikso pointed to the general public's indifference to the cuts as a potential danger.

"It's that apathy that's going to push people into more and more violence and destructive expressions of the frustration and anger they feel."

Inside the hotel, the scene could not have been more different. While protesters shouted "Solidarité" and burned signs outside, the hotel lounge was calm, oblivious to the turmoil outside. Amid thick carpets, ivory counters, and cushioned chairs, people chatted and drank Chivas under a canopy of palm trees, while soft piano music floated through the room. One lawyer from a Montreal firm who asked not to be identified, explained why the cuts are necessary and why the idea of raising taxes for the wealthy is a terrible one.

"We cannot afford to continue as it is. The cuts are absolutely necessary. Saying that the wealthy should be taxed more is totally ridiculous, stupid and dangerous. When you are taxed already at 52% (the total taxation rate) what more do you want? Sixty per cent? Seventy-five per cent? At 75% they (the wealthy) will leave. No one wants to work day and night to keep 25 cents on the dollar."

André Bisson, chairman of the Société Investement Jeunesse, and a guest at the summit, explained why the cuts were necessary as he sipped his cocktail and peered out the window at the glowing faces of the protestors, lit up by burning signs.

"We have no choice. We have no money, of course we have to cut, and cut everything."

Bisson was doubtful as to how effective the protest would actually be, and predicted not much attention would be paid to it.

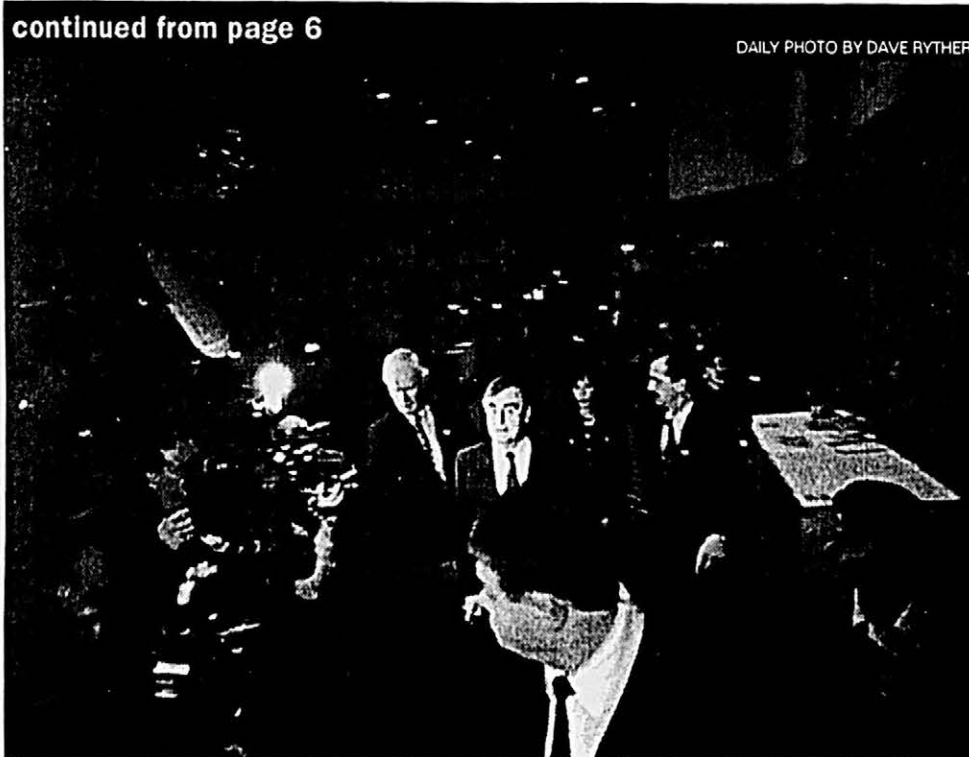
"The people around the table at the summit will be the most influential. It's fine to have a peaceful demonstration, we expected that, that's quite normal, it doesn't upset me at all."

Just after 8:30 p.m., the demonstration came to an end when several hundred protestors left the Sheraton Hotel and marched east along St. Catherine Street, ending at Berri Square, where an all-night vigil was held to protest the cuts.

—with files from Samana Siddiqui

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DAILY PHOTO BY DAVE RYTHIER



Bouchard enters the Summit.

Bouchard's consensus.

By Friday morning, Bouchard had only partly committed himself to the Zero Impoverishment Declaration, agreeing to create a \$250 million fund to help the 4% of the population that is the most impoverished, but no more. Some community organisations and the big unions, decided that for the sake of consensus this limited commitment was good enough.

But for Davide, "This is not enough. You can't make a commitment to some of the population and then say that the rest just have to submit."

### A QUESTION OF PHILOSOPHY

While such blatant displays of opposition were infrequent, the lack of a strong

sense of consensus pervaded the entire summit.

One of the major, and most glorified, proposals of the summit was the adaptation of the idea of a "social economy" — a type of system that would see the collaboration of the public, private and community sectors in the creation of jobs and the implementation of services.

"What the public sector will not be able to do for people, the private sector or the community organisations would," said Nancy Neamtan, the chairperson for the Commission on the Social Economy.

This strategy saw the development of an apprenticeship programme for youth that puts the onus on community organisations and business to create temporary work for people who do not go to school, the estab-

lishment of domestic services for seniors and the creation of more prenatal care centres for mothers.

While community organisations were happy at least with these small concessions, they were wary of the underlying philosophy of the conference.

The basic problem seemed to be the discrepancy between the rhetoric of zero deficit and competitiveness for business, and the maintenance of the quality of life for the whole population.

Marianne Roy, of the Solidarité populaire Québec criticised the government: "Even though Bouchard says that his government is social democratic, he is following a different discourse."

"The name of the game for the government is competition," continued Roy, "but if you are talking about competition then you are talking about winners and losers, and that means lots of losers and a few winners."

Roy went on to say that the acceptance of winners and losers has to be challenged. "You know, this is not a new discourse. The discourse of comparative advantage that Bouchard is talking about is the same one that led to the colonisation of India and Africa. It is a racist and class-based position that creates exploitation, and it's not even valid anymore."

Basically, said Roy, "the consequences of a free market have to be compensated for."

And this is exactly what these groups feel Bouchard is not willing to do.

So there can be no consensus. There was never any hope for it. But for Davide, that doesn't mean stopping the fight.

"Listen," she said, after twenty minutes of interviews with the media, "I am tired right now, very tired, but in a little while, when I have taken a rest, I will continue to fight, to challenge, to negotiate and to reject the discourse."



# Controversy rages at Lakehead University

## MEMBERS OF THE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY PROTEST UNIVERSITY ACTIONS

by Mark Ratner

**M**embers of Lakehead University's Aboriginal community have expressed outrage at recent policy decisions made by the school's administration.

In a press release, former Board of Governors representative and Native Canadian Fredrick Nowgesic, says he believes that "Lakehead University is ignoring the Aboriginal community, and there is an atmosphere of mistrust and racism."

With 16% of its student body composed of aboriginal students, Lakehead enrolls the largest percentage of aboriginal students of any Canadian University.

The controversy stems from a series of events that began with an alleged misappropriation of Government funds. Last year, the Ontario government pledged \$1.6 million to the university aimed at assisting aboriginal students. According to Nowgesic, the University instead used these funds to pay faculty salaries.

This act prompted a subse-

quent protest by former Chair of the University's Indigenous Studies programme, Professor McPherson. On behalf of the Aboriginal community, McPherson erected a teepee on university property. He lived there for a month in the summer of 1995. McPherson then proceeded to walk from the school's Thunder Bay Campus to Ottawa to meet with the Federal Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs to inform him of the problem.

Although McPherson's protest received some media attention, it did little in the way of altering the University's policy.

Upon returning from his walk to Ottawa, McPherson was removed from his position as chair of the department of Indigenous studies. He now states that he is sure that his removal came "as a result of his protest."

The next controversial event occurred when the sole aboriginal member of the university's Board of Governors, Nowgesic,

expressed his outrage at the University's actions. He spoke out at a board meeting on behalf of McPherson.

"For my efforts at this meeting, I suffered the indignity of a physical assault against my person by Mr. Pat O'Brian, chair of the Board of Governors," Nowgesic alleges.

He claims that O'Brian, then Board chair, impeded his path and grabbed him. Nowgesic subsequently pressed charges with the Thunder Bay Police Department.

As a result of the conflict, Nowgesic was ousted from the Lakehead Board of Governors in September, prompting his decision to contest his removal in a federal court. "I have been treated unjustly," he says.

O'Brian denies Nowgesic's claims. Although he admits that charges were pressed against him, he notes that they were quickly dismissed as "the police found there were no grounds to press

charges."

He also says that Nowgesic was not truthful about the events that transpired. O'Brian could not elaborate, however, as a wrongful dismissal trial was pending.

Lakehead University Administration offers yet a different account of the series of controversies. Vice President-Academic John Whitfield denies both the charges of McPherson and Nowgesic.

He says that McPherson's removal did not come as a result of his activism and he "questions the accuracy of [Nowgesic's] claim."

Whitfield says that the initial accusation, that University funds were misappropriated, is also untrue.

Instead, he affirms the University's commitment to its aboriginal population noting that "a number of initiatives over the years have been acted upon," and that "two-thirds of the faculty of the indigenous studies programme are native."

But Nowgesic maintains that these events highlight his frustrating seven-year tenure on the University's Board of Governors. He claims that during Board meetings, his opinions were never given full credit, and that "none of the motions I ever raised were ever seconded."

Another accusation Nowgesic makes regards the minutes of the meetings which were available on the internet. He says that initially, the minutes appeared as complete, but then, "they were suddenly erased."

"I'm not aware of any of these things happening," says Whitfield in response. He also denies that any of the University's actions had racist intentions.

Regardless, there does seem to be a general malaise among the Aboriginal community at Lakehead. A recent survey found that 80% of the aboriginal students identified a "lack of trust and respect between Lakehead University and the Aboriginal Community."

## Government should stop funding ethnic groups, says federal report

by Samer Muscati

**O**TTAWA (CUP) — The federal government should eliminate all direct funding to ethnic groups says a new report.

Money given to ethnic groups encourages the perception that the government is catering to special interest groups, according to the federally commissioned report on the future of multiculturalism.

"No matter how beneficial, as long as the work of multiculturalism is carried out through — or perceived to be carried out through — private or non-profit organisations, that work will continue to be seen as programming for special interests," says the report released October 17.

Instead, the report argues the money should go to public agencies such as the National Film Board and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC).

Ethnic groups are alarmed at the report's recommendation and say that more cuts will undermine their ability to provide adequate education and community support, as well as programmes for improving race relations.

Currently, only \$2 million of the \$18.6 million budgeted for multiculturalism will go to ethnic groups in 1996-97.

"The implications of further government cuts will be enormous," said Emmanuel Dick, president of the Canadian Ethnocultural Council (CEC) — a coalition of 37 organisations.

"New immigrants will have no more support. We won't be able to provide them with the minimal tools to participate in Canadian society."

Dick says that ethnic groups are already cash-strapped after the federal department of Heritage slashed most of its multicultural programs by 25% over the last two years. The department will see its budget lose another 29.4% over four years ending in 1999.

As a result, the CEC has lost more than 50 per cent in its funding in two years — forcing severe programme and staff cuts.

Dick says that government funding policies shouldn't be based on public misconceptions and wants the government to do a better job in educating Canadians about multicultural pro-

grammes.

He says that multiculturalism isn't about folk costumes, songs and dance anymore, but about removing barriers that prevent ethnic groups from integrating into the mainstream.

Hedy Fry, Secretary of State for Multiculturalism, agrees that "most Canadians are misinformed about multiculturalism," but would not say whether the report would change funding policies. She says that it was only one aspect of the departmental review.

"While I do not agree with all of the recommendations of the report, it points out that funding should be based on ability to meet programme objectives. This kind of accountability makes common sense and does not preclude ethnocultural organisations from receiving funding."

The Heritage department commissioned the report as part of a larger internal review of its operations. It is the first time since the Multiculturalism Act was introduced 25 years ago that the federal programmes have been scrutinised.

The McGill Daily

### brief

## THE BARNES & NOBLE MCGILL BOOKSTORE?

**W**ith the promise of more profits, two managing companies — Barnes & Noble and Follett — have proposed to take over the management of the McGill Bookstore. The consequences of a change in management could affect students, university employees and Canadian publishers.

Phyllis Heaphy, McGill's VP of Administration and Finance, does not know whether this proposed change would increase book prices. "It depends on what option we choose," she said.

But the university cannot sign over the profits to a new managing firm without the consent of SSMU, who initiated the creation of the McGill Bookstore.

The original agreement between McGill and SSMU specifies that SSMU will receive all bookstore profits once the building is paid off.

Employee-wise, McGill University would have an obligation to relocate most of these employees elsewhere if a management firm decides to downsize staff, since it offers lifetime job security to those who work for the university for

three years.

As for books from Canadian publishers, like the McGill-Queen's Press, their fate is unpredictable. When asked if an American managing company would buy fewer books from Canadian publishers, Heaphy responded, "We do not have enough information at present to answer this question."

So far, the university has made no final decisions yet. According to Phyllis Heaphy, the companies "have simply presented proposals to us on possibly managing our bookstore for us."

Don McGowan, VP University Affairs for the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU), feels the university should not make this decision alone. He promises to bring the issue of the bookstore management to Senate. "The core of a university is books," he says. "It is an academic issue."

To review the proposals, McGill has hired consultants who will table their report in a few weeks.

— Martha MacDonald



# brief

## TO PHYSICIANS, GOVERNMENT'S DON'T ADD UP

**B**race yourselves — the shock waves of Québec's health care virage have yet to spread through the system, and the system isn't ready.

Last spring, the government began to transfer the burden of health care from hospitals CLSCs (provincially monitored community health centers) and the community. Their first step was to reduce the budgets of hospitals across Québec.

"But the CLSCs are not ready for the virage," says Dr. David Gayton of McGill's Royal Victoria Hospital, one of the few Montréal hospitals to remain open

since the provincial government's implementation of the virage.

Gayton also noted the virage's impact on health care workers, explaining that experienced nurses from closed hospitals are bumping CLSC staff.

Speaking to nurses, administrators and physicians earlier this month, Gayton gave a physician's perspective of the numbers behind the virage and what they mean.

"We're in for hard times," says Dr. Gayton. "We cannot produce more services with less money."

- Zachary Schwartz

### 4 months

Number of months the Québec government took to push through recommendations for the transfer of resources from hospitals to the community. But Gayton says the transfer of responsibility to CLSCs disappears in the final document.

## The other side of paradise

Sri Lanka's on-going genocide against its Tamil population.

by Hasan Karrar

**P**icture this: a tropical island somewhere in the Indian Ocean with serene beaches, palm trees, and luscious plantations. A state where law and order is the norm not the exception, where over 92% of the population is literate, and where Medicare and education is available for all, free of charge.

Now picture a city with 80% of its buildings destroyed by continuous artillery shelling and aerial bombing which has continued on and off for the last two decades. A town with no electricity, no water, and where the people survive on a staple diet of fish and rice. A state where even the most basic supplies, such as life saving medicines are impossible to come by because of a central government embargo, which is bent on eliminating the local population through genocidal tactics.

Worlds apart? Hardly.

This is one and the same country. Welcome to Sri Lanka.

For the Sinhalese Buddhist population (approximately 80%), their country is a model of freedom, democracy and rights, an example to other third world countries. Yet while Sri Lanka is lauded as a democratic welfare state in the international arena, little attention is placed on Sri Lanka's ongoing genocide in the northern and eastern parts of the island — against the Tamil people in the Hindu dominated regions.

"This is a war behind closed doors," said Joseph Emmanuel,

the Tamil vicar, in a speech at Concordia University on October 25. "Journalists or foreign observers are not allowed to enter."

Emmanuel was at Concordia as part of an international tour on the repression of the Tamil people in Sri Lanka.

With reference to the day in and day out bombing of the northern region, Jaffna, Emmanuel said that 99% of the people who die are civilians.

Despite this fact, the war is written of as an attempt to eradicate terrorism, both by people in other parts of Sri Lanka and the rest of the world as well.

"Our survival is a miracle," said Emmanuel. "We are in the desperate situation of losing hope."

### THE WAR OF RESISTANCE

Sri Lanka's two ethnic groups, the Buddhist dominated Sinhalese, and the Hindu dominated Tamils, had lived as two separate societies for more than two thousand years. Colonisation by the Portuguese, the Dutch and finally the British, began the process of lumping together the two altogether different ethnic groups.

By the time the British decided to call it quits in 1948, it was taken for a fact that Sri Lanka was one "country," and thousands of years of history and identity was casually swept under the carpet. This was a miraculous feat of forgetting, which we have seen just about anywhere our colonial masters chose to take an extended vacation.

Sinhalese nationalism had strong Buddhist overtones from the very beginning. In 1956 Sinhalese was made the official language of the state. Between 1956 and 1976, the Tamil minority gradually found that most venues for jobs were closed off to them. State persecution grew steadily.

Fed up with an increasingly claustrophobic state, in 1976, 75% of the Tamil population opted to vote for a separate homeland.

1977 saw increased persecution of the Tamil people — both because the Tamil people had made their desire for self determination clear, and also because after almost a decade of flirtation, the Sri Lankan government had finally managed to sell itself to the Bretton Woods financial institutions.

The World Bank, as always, was looking for a market for finished goods, as well as cheap labor and raw material, and the Sri Lankan government was looking for an institution to bail them out of a growing financial crisis. If anything, lack of stability in the Tamil dominated Jaffna was seen as a threat to this match made in heaven.

### ORGANISED YOUTH

Fed up with government persecution, the previously passive Tamil youth, organised to form the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) to fight for a separate homeland.

The formation of the LTTE

gave the Sinhalese government the final justification to go after the Tamil population with the excuse of eradicating terrorism.

"The government calls it a war for peace," said Emmanuel. "The Sri Lankans stand up in the United Nations and say that they are committed to eradicating terrorism. But they refuse to acknowledge state terrorism. This is hypocrisy."

"They say that the Tamil problem is a terrorist problem. But no one bothers to ask why the Tamils took up arms in the first place," he continued.

"We are not begging the Sinhalese for our rights," he added. "These are our rights."

Emmanuel said that while he did not support violence, he could understand why the Tamil youth had taken up arms.

"I can understand why after 20 years of death, disillusionment, and suffering they took up arms. They are guerrillas fighting for a cause," declared Emmanuel.

"They are our sons and daughters. Their aspirations are our aspirations. Their cause is a noble cause," he added.

### THE PATH TO THE FUTURE

For over a decade the LTTE and the Sri Lankan army have been locked in a military stalemate with both sides claiming victory.

It has become clear at this point that the Sri Lankan state shall never be able to overcome Jaffna; Tamil perseverance in the

face of the astonishing military might of the state is an indicator that they will continue the struggle.

Emmanuel's talk implied that international awareness of what is happening in Jaffna could bring the ongoing state genocide to a halt.

Chandrahandan Joseph, a professor at Concordia University, who left Jaffna last year was also angry at the indifference of the Western world.

"This democratic world has done nothing to prevent the death of innocent people," he said.

"Canada has contributed (to the persecution of the Tamils) by giving the finest in military technology to the Sinhalese army and then claiming indifference," Joseph argued.

Emmanuel claimed that it was the obligation of the Canadian state to interfere in the persecution of what has been happening in the northern and eastern parts of Sri Lanka.

"I am appealing to your people," he said. "The people here must interfere with what has been happening. Interference is a moral obligation."

For Emmanuel, there is a discrepancy in the way the world reacts to violence. He commented that when one hundred people are killed by a bomb blast, the world shudders and condemns terrorism, "but when thousands of people die there is no condemnation."

he asks "Why are you silent?"



# NUMBERS

**17%**

Percentage of unnecessary hospital days in which patients could have been dealt with on an out-patient basis, according to a 1995-1996 study in the Royal Victoria Hospital's Department of Medicine.

**8.6 Days**  
Current average length of patients' hospital stays.

**6.8 Days**  
Government's proposals for average length of patients' hospital stays.

**275 beds**

Number of hospital beds the Québec government deems necessary for every 100,000 inhabitants. According to Gayton, this works out to about 7,000 beds for the population of Montréal, and is in line with the North American average.

**750 beds**

Approximate number of hospital beds being closed down with the merger of the Royal Victoria and Montréal General Hospitals into the McGill "superhospital," according to Gayton.

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**\$3.7 million**

Official government budget cut for the Royal Victoria Hospital in 1995-1996. However, says Gayton, the government does not include inflation when calculating budget cuts.

**\$5.85 million**

Actual government budget cut for the Royal Victoria Hospital including government's failure to account for inflation.



**\$2.96 million**

Projected government budget cut for the Royal Victoria Hospital in 1996-1997.

**\$7.06 million**

Actual government budget cut for the Royal Victoria Hospital including government's failure to account for inflation.



